



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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If you wish to provide feedback or subscribe to this newsletter, please contact Katie Fredheim on (03) 6222 5815 or email tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au. We also encourage you to place this newsletter on your organisation's intranet.

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General Statistical Enquiries

Phone: 1300 135 070 (between 9.00am-4.30pm EST)

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National Regional Profile: For Users of Small Area Data

The fourth edition of the National Regional Profile (NRP) was released on 28 July. The NRP provides a brief statistical summary of key economic and social information for various levels of the Australian Standard Geographic Classification (ASGC), including Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) and Local Government Areas (LGAs), making the NRP a useful tool and valuable resource for users of small area data. Data in the new release of the NRP spans the years 2002 to 2006, where available, with data based on the geographical boundaries described in the 2006 edition of the ASGC.

Data are provided in the NRP from a variety of ABS and non-ABS sources covering: population characteristics, births and deaths, unemployment, taxable income, wage and salary earners, building approvals, and motor vehicle sales etc., enabling users to obtain a snapshot of selected characteristics of a local area or to compare the same characteristics across areas. Some of the data in the NRP is not available anywhere else on the ABS website in the same level of detail. The NRP includes some property sales and property valuations data for Tasmania from non-ABS sources.

This release of the NRP contains a number of improvements on the previous edition including a new [NRP Welcome Page](#) to assist users in navigating through the product and locating data, 'Help' information including a frequently asked questions guide and improved mapping, including the

introduction of Local Government Area maps in this edition. Another new Help feature is a series of videos showing how to use the NRP. These can be found from the NRP Video Demonstration link on the Welcome Page.

We are interested in your feedback on the NRP. When using the NRP please take a few minutes to fill in the Feedback form available from the menu bar on the Welcome Page. Your responses will contribute to improving products and services in the future.

For further information on the National Regional Profile please email: regional.statistics@abs.gov.au.

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Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators

Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators (TSRI) is a new web-based product containing a summary of Tasmanian statistical information. It uses both ABS and non-ABS sources.

TSRI content is being built up progressively over the first four quarters, and will be updated regularly, as data are released. The first three releases have covered the topics of Labour, Economic Activity, Industry, Population, Family and Community, Household Economic Resources, Education, Housing and Construction, and Transport. Each topic presents summary commentary and includes graphs, maps and tables of data. Excel workbooks with more detailed data at state, regional and local government levels are linked to each topic and some Population Census and regional tables are included. Included in the third release was a feature article on adult literacy in Tasmania, which examined the Tasmanian results from the 2006 national Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey.

The data contained in each topic are expected to be updated once per year. In future issues, it is planned to increase the number of regional and non-ABS tables, as data become available. The fourth TSRI release, which will complete the current range of content, is scheduled for 31 October 2008 and will cover:

- Crime and Justice
- Health
- Environment

Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators (cat. no. 1307.6) is available free of charge from the ABS website: <https://www.abs.gov.au>.

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A Snapshot of Australian Society: Release of Australian Social Trends, 2008

Australian Social Trends, 2008 (cat. no. 4102.0) was released on 23 July 2008. This publication presents information on a wide range of social issues and areas of public policy concern. The publication covers topics including family and community, health, education, work and housing. It also provides international comparisons and includes data cubes containing a ten-year time series of key indicators at both national and state/territory level.

For further information please contact the Director of Social and Progress Reporting, linda.fardell@abs.gov.au.

Tasmanian social trends

Volunteers

- In 2006, 36% of Tasmanians over the age of 18 had done some kind of volunteering in the previous 12 months.

Crime/safety

- In 2005, Tasmania had the lowest level of household crime in Australia, with 4.5% of the population reporting being victims of actual or attempted break ins or motor vehicle theft.

Home ownership

- In 2006-07, first home buyers in Tasmania borrowed an average of \$164,400, the lowest average compared to other states or territories.

Health

- In 2004-05, Tasmania had the lowest proportion of people with diabetes (2.8%), and between 2004-2006, the lowest rate of death from stroke (45 per 100,000 population). In 2006, Tasmania also had a lower infant mortality rate (3.9 per 1,000 live births) than the national average (4.7 per 1,000 live births).

Trade union membership

- In 2007, Tasmania had the highest proportion of employees that were trade union members, 24%.

Education

- In 2006, in terms of education and literacy, Tasmanian children in Year 5 had the second highest rate of meeting national reading benchmarks at 94%, with only ACT higher at 96%. (Australian average 88%).

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Training Course: Understanding Demographic Data

The Tasmania Office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics will be running a one-day course on Understanding Demographic Data on 3 November 2008.

This course provides an understanding of the demographic data framework and the processes which shape the population and includes practical exercises in the analysis of demographic data. At the conclusion of the course you will be able to:

- Understand the demographic data framework
- Understand processes which shape the population
- Have a basic ability to analyse demographic data

This course will be most beneficial to people who use and/or need to understand demographic data.

The cost of the one-day course is \$450 per person.

For further information, please phone Sally Wilkinson on 03 6222 5878 or email tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au.

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Tasmanian Innovation Census

The Tasmanian Innovation Census is a three-year research project undertaken by the Australian Innovation Research Centre (AIRC) at the University of Tasmania, in collaboration with the State Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

In previous national innovation and R&D surveys, Tasmania ranks among the lowest of all States and Territories. The Innovation Census aims to develop a fuller understanding of the nature and extent of innovation activity in Tasmania, using much bigger samples and different data collection methodologies than previous studies.

The AIRC has recently reached a major project milestone with the release of the first publication:

'Innovation in Tasmania: an Innovation Census in an Australian State', which is available to download through the AIRC website at <http://www.airc.net.au>.

This paper provides a broad overview of the findings, and is the first of a number of papers planned for release. Future papers will include a study of the characteristics of high performing innovators, a study on research & development and collaboration, a review of geographical location, clustering and innovation performance, and a qualitative study of key innovations based on follow up case studies.

The ABS has played a role in the Census project, with an ABS officer seconded to coordinate Census project management activities, as well as the ABS Tasmanian Office providing methodological advice for the Census non-response survey and analysis.

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Tasmania Together: Online Benchmark Reporting

Tasmania *Together* launched their new Online Benchmark Reporting (OBR) system on 11 July 2008. OBR provides up-to-date information on all of Tasmania *Together's* benchmarks as soon as it becomes available. Previously progress information was only released every two years through hardcopy progress reports. Chris Carswell from the ABS assisted with the development and implementation of the system. The new system allows visitors to see the most current information available. The online reports measure progress against Tasmania *Together* targets, and include graphs, explanations of measures, sources and comments from the Progress Board. Using the system you can search a database of all the Tasmania *Together* measures of progress against each of the 12 goals and view detailed reports or a summary of progress. The new reporting system is in keeping with the Board's strategy of increasing community engagement with Tasmania *Together* by providing relevant and up-to-date information to the public.

The OBR system can be found on the Tasmanian Together website at <http://www.tasmaniatogether.tas.gov.au/obr/>.

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Improving Statistical Literacy: New Online Tool

Statistical Language! (cat. no. 1332.0.55.002) is a new online tool to help users of statistics better understand the basics of statistical terminology. Common terms such as 'mean', 'time series', 'index' and 'measures of error and spread' are explained in plain English, with a simple to understand description, an explanation of how it is derived, and when it is an appropriate measure. Explanations are supplemented with examples and colourful graphics.

Here's an example of the content, defining and exploring an 'index':

DEFINITION:

An **Index** is a number used to show the variation in some quantity over time. It is usual to fix the first observation (sometimes called a benchmark) to a base value of 100, then having all the following observations linked to this base to compare any relative changes over time. It is a type of time series data.

WHAT DO INDEXES TELL YOU?

Indexes are commonly used to track the changes in business and economic conditions. They measure the growth of prices, production and other quantities of economic interest. One of the most widely known indexes is the Consumer Price Index, which provides a general measure of change in the price of consumer goods and services.

HOW CAN WE CALCULATE AN INDEX?

Indexes are calculated by comparing variations in quantity from one time period to the next. For a price index the calculation is the price from one time period divided by the base period price. In the following

example the 'Widget Price Index' started in 2005. The following table demonstrates how a 'Widget Price Index' would be calculated in 2006 and 2007. The percentage change in the price index from 2006 to 2007 is

$$\frac{(124 - 116)}{116} \times 100\% = 6.9\%$$

Prices of Widgets 2005-2007

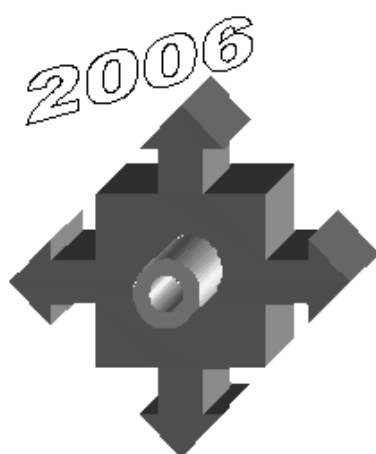
Year	Price per Widget (\$)	Widget Price Index
2005	50	100
2006	58	$58/50 \times 100 = 116$
2007	62	$62/50 \times 100 = 124$

WHEN IS AN INDEX NOT APPROPRIATE?

Care should be taken when using indexes. Of particular importance is to ensure the items being monitored do not somehow change over time. For instance, the production cost of an item may not have changed over time, yet in reality the size or the quality of the item may have decreased. For example, the diagram below illustrates the widget associated with the price index.



Model: WDGT10b



Model: WDGT10b



Model: WDGT10c

However it can be seen that in 2007 the widget produced was different from previous years, meaning the index value for 2007 is not necessarily comparable with those of the previous years.

For further information see Statistical Language!

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Planning for the ABS-hosted NatStats 08 Conference is well underway. The conference will be held from 19-21 November 2008 at the Crown Promenade in Melbourne and will connect users and producers of official statistics, and provide an opportunity for participants to discuss strategies for improving statistics for policy and decision-makers.

The main theme for the conference will be 'Working together for a better informed Australian Society'. Keynote and invited speakers are being identified who are significant contributors in the policy arena or who are valued and recognised in their particular field of work and can provide insights into the future role of statistics.

The NatStats 08 Conference will be linked with the global initiative, being led by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development), on Measuring Progress in Societies as well as the Australian initiatives being developed through the 2020 Summit and the National Reform Agenda.

If you would like more information on the conference, please email Mark Lound at mark.lound@abs.gov.au or phone 02 6252 6325. Alternatively, if you would like to register your interest in the conference please email [conference.solutions: natstats@con-sol.com](mailto:conference.solutions@natstats@con-sol.com) or phone (02) 6285 3000.

Look out for details of the conference in future editions of Tasmanian Statistical News.

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Selected Recent Releases

04/09/08 Australian Census Analytic Program: Counting the Homeless, 2006 (cat. no. 2050.0)

This publication aims to establish the extent of homelessness in Australia at the time of the 2006 Census, using Census data complemented by data from other surveys of youth homelessness and users of support services. It also provides information on the change in the size and composition of the homeless population over time, and draws on earlier research using 1996 and 2001 Census data.

02/09/08 Building Approvals, Australia, Jul 2008 (cat. no. 8731.0)

Provides the number and value of dwelling units approved by sector (public/private) and by state, number and value of new other residential dwelling units approved by type of building, and the number and value of non-residential building jobs approved by type of building (i.e. by function such as 'retail and wholesale trade', 'offices') and value ranges. State data includes the number of private sector houses approved; number and value of new other residential dwellings by type of building such as flats, units or apartments in a building of one or two storeys; number and value of non-residential building jobs by type of building and sector; and for Capital City Statistical Divisions, the total number of dwelling units approved broken down by Houses, Other Dwellings and Total Dwelling Units. Seasonally adjusted and trend estimates by state are included for the number of dwelling units and value of building approved.

01/09/08 Business Indicators, Australia, Jun 2008 (cat. no. 5676.0)

Contains quarterly estimates of profits, income from the sale of goods and services, wages and salaries, and the book value of inventories. These data are classified by broad industry, and original, seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are included for Australia, in current price terms. Volume measures are published for sales and inventories. State/territory data also included for sales, and wages and salaries, in current price terms.

27/08/2008 Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, Jun 2008 (cat. no. 8755.0)

Presents preliminary statistics for the value of construction work done in Australia. Separate data are shown for building work done and for engineering work done for both the private and public sectors. The building work done data are further dissected into new residential, alterations and additions to residential and non-residential work. Original, seasonally adjusted and trend estimates for Australia, as well as some original state and territory data, are provided in current prices and chain volume measures terms. This is the major source of data used to compile the national accounts estimates for private gross fixed capital formation on dwellings, and other buildings and structures.

21/08/08 Research Paper: Experimental Estimates of Adult Literacy for Local Government Areas (Methodology Advisory Committee), Jun 2008 (cat. no. 1352.0.55.094)

Large national surveys such as the Survey of Aspects of Literacy and the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey are able to provide literacy estimates for national and state levels. However, due to sample size constraints, it is not possible to produce estimates for smaller geographical areas using the sample data alone. The purpose of this paper is to derive experimental estimates of adult literacy for Local Government Areas from the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey 2006 (ALLS 2006). This paper uses a small area estimation technique - specifically a multilevel random intercept model - to derive estimates for small geographical areas.

19/08/08 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2007(cat. no. 3235.0)

This product contains estimates of the resident population by age (in five-year age groups up to 85 and over) and sex as at 30 June 2007. The areas for which estimates are provided are Local Government Areas (LGAs), Statistical Local Areas (SLAs), Statistical Divisions (SDs) and Statistical Subdivisions (SSDs) and states and territories of Australia, according to the 2007 edition of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC).

12/08/08 Tasmanian Key Indicators, Jul 2008 (cat. no. 1304.6)

Tasmanian Key Indicators contains the latest social and economic summary data on Tasmania, including labour force, wages and prices, tourism, finance, consumption and investment, state accounts, population, living arrangements, mortality, education and health. It is released on a monthly basis. Tasmanian Key Indicators features links to source publications on the ABS website to enable readers to explore particular topics in more detail. The data are also presented in an Excel spreadsheet in the Downloads tab.

05/08/08 People with a Need for Assistance - A Snapshot, 2006 (cat. no. 4445.0)

The 2006 Census was the first Census to include questions on a person's need for assistance in one of the three core activities of communication, self-care and body movement. This snapshot examines the age, sex, indigenous status, state/territory, remoteness index, living arrangements, proficiency in English, labour force participation and occupation of people with a need for assistance.

04/08/08 House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, Jun 2008 (cat. no. 6416.0)

Provides estimates of changes in housing prices in each of the eight capital cities of Australia. The information is presented in the form of price indexes constructed separately for established houses and for project homes.

31/07/08 Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators, Jun 2008 (cat. no. 1307.6)

A compendium of summary statistical information about Tasmania. Information is presented by topic, with more detailed data in Excel spreadsheets. Contains summary commentary, tables, maps and graphs. Some non-ABS and regional data are also included. Topics covered include labour force, wages and prices, tourism, finance, state accounts, population, household and family characteristics, education, health and environment.

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Future Statistical Releases

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About this Release

Tasmanian Statistical News is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical releases, seminars, training and reviews.

Previously known as Statistical News Tasmania.

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